



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
HELD IN ROUND TOWER CHAMBER, ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE
ON TUESDAY 6 MAY 2025 AT 6.30 PM**

In the Chair	:	Councillor V McWilliam
Committee Members (In person)	:	Aldermen – L Clarke and J Smyth Councillors – J Gilmour, AM Logue, A McAuley, H Magill, M Stewart and S Ward
Committee Members (Remote)	:	Alderman – P Bradley Councillors – R Foster and E McLaughlin
Non Committee Members (In person)	:	Councillor B Webb
Officers Present	:	Director of Parks & Leisure Operations - M McDowell Director of Sustainability – M Lavery Head of Parks Operations - P Mawhinney Head of Waste Strategy & Sustainability – L Daly Head of Leisure Operations – D O'Hagan ICT Systems Support Officer – C Bell Member Services Officer – L Irwin

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the May Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor Burbank
Councillor Ní Chonghaile
Alderman McGrath

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 3.4 – Alderman Clarke
Item 3.4 – Alderman Smyth

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 EH/EHS/FC/003 REVIEW OF THE FOOD LAW CODE OF PRACTICE AND PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NORTHERN IRELAND)

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report was to inform Members of a consultation by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) on proposed changes to the Food Law Code of Practice and Practice Guidance (Northern Ireland) and to seek approval for Council's draft response.

2. Background

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) had launched a consultation on the proposed amendments to the Food Law Code of Practice (Northern Ireland). This consultation sought stakeholders' views on proposed changes to the Northern Ireland Code and the accompanying Practice Guidance.

The **Food Law Code of Practice** provided official guidelines for Councils on how to enforce food safety and hygiene laws to ensure food businesses complied with Regulations. The **Food Law Practice Guidance** complemented the Code, offering non-statutory advice and best practices to help Councils implement food safety enforcement consistently and effectively.

The proposed amendments aimed to provide Councils with greater flexibility in delivering official food hygiene controls and allow more effective targeting of resources to address emerging risks in the food chain.

Details of the consultation can be found at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/consultations/consultation-on-proposed-amendments-to-the-food-law-code-of-practice-and-practice-guidance-northern-ireland>

3. Key Issues

The consultation outlined several key proposals designed to enhance food hygiene enforcement and ensure that practices aligned with current

challenges and needs. These proposals focused on:

- Adopting a revised risk-based approach to prioritise and set timescales for initial inspections of new food establishments;
- Allowing adjustments to an establishment's food hygiene intervention risk rating, based on a broader range of control methods, including remote techniques;
- Expanding the range of activities that can be performed by Officers without formal food hygiene qualifications, provided they are competent;
- Clarifying the approach to interventions at food establishments in risk category E premises;
- Removing the mandatory requirement for a specific number of hours for continuing professional development (CPD);
- Implementing various amendments to align with legislative changes, improve clarity, enhance consistency, and keep the Code current.

A draft consultation response (circulated), prepared in collaboration with Environmental Health teams across all Councils in Northern Ireland, highlighted the following main points:

- Council supported the updated risk-based approach to prioritisation and scheduling of new food business inspections but noted limitations due to IT system constraints (MIS), resource pressures, and limited time savings from remote assessments;
- Oppose the use of remote inspections for Category C and D businesses, based on previous experience showing these methods were less effective than physical inspections. Remote assessments should only be used for Category E premises or to verify follow-up actions;
- Significant concerns about extending official control duties to unqualified staff for D and E category premises due to supervisory burdens and capacity limitations. However, they supported using unqualified staff for administrative and low-risk tasks;
- Supports the clarification in the approach to Category E premises;
- Concerns over the proposal to remove the prescriptive number of CPD hours, emphasising that the 20-hour CPD requirement (including 10 core hours) should remain to ensure Officers maintain up-to-date expertise, professional credibility, and adequate training standards;
- Strongly opposed relocating the FSA endorsed qualification from the Code to the Practice Guidance, warning that this could lower professional standards.

4. Summary

Council broadly supported the aims of the proposed changes, particularly those promoting a risk-based and flexible approach. However, some concerns remained around the practical implementation, impact on enforcement quality and the risk of undermining professional standards.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the draft consultation response be approved.

ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Commercial)

3.2 PK/REG/028 APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY APPROVAL OF PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGE / CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek temporary approval for a venue in which Civil Marriage/Civil Partnership ceremonies could be conducted.

2. Background

Under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and the Civil Partnership Act (2004), the Council had the responsibility to approve appropriate applications for Temporary Place Approvals for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships. The process required that a Notice of Interest be displayed for a three-week period in a prominent place at the venue to allow for any public objection.

3. New Application

An application for a Temporary Place Approval had been received from the owner of Crown and Shamrock Inn, 584 Antrim Road, Newtownabbey, with specified areas detailed as a marquee at the back of the premises.

No public objections had been received with the premises also having been formally inspected and deemed appropriate to proceed.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the Crown and Shamrock Inn, 584 Antrim Road, Newtownabbey be temporarily approved to hold Civil Marriages under the terms of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 and Civil Partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act (2004).

ACTION BY: Paula Redpath, Registrar

3.3 PBS/PS/008 WHITEABBEY CLOCK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek Council approval to dispose of salvaged clock parts that had been deemed beyond repair.

2. Background

A clock previously mounted on townhouses along Shore Road in Whiteabbey was severely damaged during a storm in 2016. Following the incident, Council collected and stored the remaining components, which included a wall bracket, a clock face, and a small section of the clock housing. No mechanical parts were recovered.

Subsequently, Council installed a new free-standing clock near the War Memorial on Shore Road, opposite the original location.

In 2016, Abbeyville Residents Association (now Whiteabbey Residents Association) requested the salvaged clock parts with the intention of refurbishment. However, the request was declined due to the condition of the parts, potential planning considerations, and the decision to erect a new clock. The stored parts were also inspected by a specialist contractor, who confirmed they were beyond repair.

3. Current Position

Council had recently received a renewed request from the Whiteabbey Residents Association to have the original salvaged parts donated to them, with a view to preserving or refurbishing the clock. Despite being advised of the clock's condition and associated concerns—including planning requirements and energy supply—the group remained interested in retaining the parts for heritage purposes.

At the request of a Member, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations undertook to take photographic evidence of the clock parts which were to be disposed of.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Ward and agreed that

approval be granted for the disposal of the salvaged clock parts, which have been confirmed as beyond repair.

ACTION BY: David Blair, Head of Estate Services and Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

Having declared an interest in item 3.4, Alderman Clarke and Alderman Smyth left the Chamber.

3.4 **PK/GEN/223 HORTICULTURAL GRANT AID PROGRAMME**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the recommendations set within the 1st Call of the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme

2. Background

Members were reminded that Council previously approved the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme for the 2024/25 year. However, due to delays in finalising the grant administration criteria and in-year budgetary pressures, the programme had been deferred to 2025/26.

The programme offered grants of up to £1,500—fully funded—to support up to 20 local community groups in delivering horticultural projects on land accessible to the general public within the Borough. Eligible applicants must be fully constituted community groups, schools, or sporting organisations based in the Borough.

Successful applications would demonstrate increased community involvement in planting activities and/or the purchase of horticultural materials and features.

3. Grant Programme – First Call

A total of 12 applications were received during the first call for the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme. Each submission had been thoroughly reviewed and scored in accordance with the approved criteria. A comprehensive table outlining each application—including key details and corresponding recommendations—had been circulated for Members' information and consideration as part of the decision-making process.

4. Financial Position

The approved budget for the 2025/26 Horticultural Grant Aid Programme was £30,000. Based on the assessment outcomes and subject to Member approval of the recommended successful applicants, a total of £16,440 would be allocated in this round. This would leave a remaining budget of £13,560. A second call for applications would be issued shortly, with submissions to be assessed and presented for consideration at a future meeting of the Operations Committee.

In response to Members' queries, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations agreed to launch the Grant Aid Programme earlier in the calendar year and to extend the application window in order to maximise applications.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

approval be granted for the Horticultural Grant Aid Programme applications, totalling £16,440 for the period 1 April -15 April 2025.

ACTION BY: Paul McWhinney, Head of Parks Operations

Alderman Clarke and Alderman Smyth returned to the Chamber.

3.5 WM/WM/037 SUPPLY OF CADDY LINERS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the change in the supply of caddy liners.

2. Background

Members were reminded that in December 2024, changes to the current caddy liner scheme were approved.

It was recommended that residents would receive one free roll of caddy liners, distributed twice a year to residents' homes with further liners available for collection by residents from Council and community facilities.

Due to a change in legislation, all Councils in England must introduce food waste collections. This has had a significant increase in demand for caddy liners and has led to a delay in receiving caddy liners from the supplier. As a result, it was proposed that the first delivery of caddy liners should be postponed until October 2025. This was to avoid the first delivery taking place during the summer months and to maximise resident participation in receiving their entitled roll of caddy liners.

In the meantime, caddy liners would continue to be distributed by the contractor when residents presented their red tag.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the first delivery of caddy liners be approved to take place in October 2025.

ACTION BY: Claire Evans, Climate, Waste and Sustainability Officer

3.6 EHS/FC/008 PUBLIC ANALYST APPOINTMENT

1. Purpose

Members were reminded that Council recently completed a tendering process on behalf of the other 11 Councils in Northern Ireland, to identify suitable providers for the Public Analyst Service. In accordance with Article 27 of the Food Safety (NI) Order 1991, the Council was required to appoint one or more individuals to serve as Public Analysts within its district.

2. Background

The Public Analyst service was a scientific body who help protect public health by analysing food, water, and related products. It supports the Council in enforcing food safety laws through sample testing and expert advice.

As reported at the April Operations Committee, the contract for Public Analyst

Services for the 11 Councils had been awarded to Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd (EFTI). The new two-year contract runs until 31 March 2027, with an option to extend for an additional two years. EFTI was also the Council's previous contractor for this service.

3. Key Issues

Article 27 of the Food Safety (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 required that the Council appoint one or more persons to act as Public Analyst(s) within the district of the Council. This report sought the formal appointment of the following persons as Public Analysts for Council in accordance with Article 27 of the above Order.

Public Analysts

Mr Duncan Kenelm Arthur BSc MChemA CChem MRSC
Mr Nigel Kenneth Payne MSc MChemA CChem MRSC
Ms Lilian Emma Jane Downie MChem MChemA CChem MRSC
Ms Michelle Evans BSc MChemA CChem MRSC
Ms Donna Hanks BSc MChemA MRSC
Ms Mary Butts MSc MChemA MRS

Having met the qualifications required by Public Analyst(s) as set out in the Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, the above-named persons could be appointed to act as Public Analyst for the Council.

4. Summary

Eurofins Food Testing Ireland Ltd (EFTI) had been appointed to deliver the Public Analyst Contract for the 11 Councils, supporting Environmental Health with food sampling, analysis, reporting, and expert advice. The listed individuals must be formally appointed by Council to perform these duties.

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the persons listed be appointed as Public Analysts for the Council under Article 27 of the Food Safety (Northern Ireland) Order 1991.

ACTION BY: Christina McErlean, Deputy Head of Environmental Health (Commercial)

4 ITEMS FOR NOTING

4.1 EH/PHWB/002/VOL 1 HOME ACCIDENT PREVENTION 2024 -2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to inform Members about the activities undertaken by the Home Safety Officer during the 2024–2025 financial year.

2. Background

Members were reminded that Council's Home Safety Officer provided free home safety inspections to residents aged over 65, vulnerable adults, and eligible families with children under 5. These inspections included the provision of tailored home safety equipment. Additionally, the Officer would coordinate the distribution of such equipment to families with young children who had undergone inspections by Health Visitors. Funding for these initiatives was provided by the Public Health Agency (PHA), which set annual targets for the number of safety checks for over 65s and equipment deliveries for under 5s. During the 2024-2025 financial year, the PHA set a target of 156 home safety checks for over 65s.

3. Key Issues

Between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, the Home Safety Officer conducted 287 home safety checks for residents aged 65 and over, exceeding the PHA target of 156. In addition, 17 checks were carried out for vulnerable adults, and 8 for families with children under 5. A total of 221 equipment deliveries were made to eligible under 5 households.

Each home safety check included an assessment to determine if the resident required further support. In the past financial year, 60% of those assessed were referred to additional services, such as the Police and Community Safety Partnership, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, or for assisted bin collections. Upon completion of the assessment, residents received tailored home safety equipment to meet their specific needs. Throughout the year, 1,368 pieces of equipment were distributed to over 65s, and another 1,489 pieces were provided to eligible families with children under 5.

The Home Safety Officer also engaged with the community through various initiatives, delivering 28 home safety talks, participating in 19 information events, hosting 4 electric blanket exchange events, and organising 2 falls prevention seminars in collaboration with the Community Occupational Therapist and Antrim Hospital's Falls Team.

To further promote home safety awareness, five articles were published in 'Borough Life' and 'News for You', the Council's age-friendly magazine. Additionally, seven social media posts and seven informative videos were shared, including "David's Story," which highlighted the impact of a fall in the home and which was viewed over 124,000 times.

The Council's Home Safety webpage offers a range of advice and informational videos to help residents reduce risks in their homes. It also featured an "Ask the Home Safety Officer" section, where residents could submit questions and receive personalised guidance on home safety matters. The webpage could be accessed at:

<https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/residents/residents-community-information/community-advice/home-accident-prevention/>

4. Financial Position

The Home Safety Programme was externally funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA), which allocated £33,289 for the 2024-2025 year. This funding supports the delivery of home safety checks, the provision of safety equipment aimed at reducing accidents in the home. The PHA's funding was part of its broader commitment to improving health and wellbeing outcomes and addressing health inequalities in the Borough.

5. Summary

During the 2024-2025 financial year, the Home Safety Officer conducted 287 home safety checks and facilitated 221 equipment deliveries to families with children under 5. In total, 2,857 pieces of home safety equipment were distributed to eligible residents.

The Officer also provided in-person advice at 45 community events, including home safety talks, information sessions, and falls prevention seminars. To further share home safety information, resources were made available through various platforms such as Council magazines, social media videos, and the Council's website.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the report be noted

4.2 L/LEI/SD/018 HEALTH INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN – UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide a Quarter 4 update on Council's Health Intervention Action Plan for 2024-25

2. Introduction/Background

Members were advised that Council approved the Health Intervention Action Plan (2022-27) in November 2022, a copy was circulated for Members' reference. The plan was designed to increase regular and sustainable participation in exercise across all age groups, with the wider aim of tackling wider health issues in vulnerable and inactive groups.

3. Results in Quarter 4 2024/25

Officers developed and coordinated delivery of a range Council led programmes as well as working in collaboration with relevant partner organisations, to facilitate the effective delivery of the Action Plan. For 2024-25 a total of 25,363 participated in these programmes, 9% ahead of target with a detailed breakdown as follows:

Programmes	24/25 Annual Target	24/25 Total
Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS)	200	150 completers
Move More Cancer Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation Programme	150	96 completers
Age Friendly (Live Long, Fall's Prevention, Walking Netball, Aqua Fit and Nordic Walking)	20,000	21,100
Exercise for Mental Health Programme	900	1,930
Pulmonary Maintenance Programme	800	520
Cardiac Rehabilitation and Maintenance Programmes	600	1171
Programmes for People with a Disability	400	489
Veterans (New)	60	19

4. Funding

In February 2025 PHA confirmed an additional £9,671 funding for the over delivery of level 4 completers for Cancer, Pulmonary and Cardiac groups.

Breakdown of external funding confirmed for 2024-25 to assist in the delivery of programmes:

Programme	Funded by	Total
Physical Activity Referral Schemes (PARS)	PHA	£31,461
Level 4 delivery- additional funding for over performance	PHA	£9,671
Walking Football Programme	NHSCT	£1,890
Falls Prevention Steady and Strong Programme – due Q3	NHSCT	£1,850
Move More (Cancer Rehabilitation Programme)	Macmillan	£5,000
Total		£49,872

5. 2025-26 Health Programming

Targets were now in place for each centre in 2025-26 with the overall targets outlined below:

Programmes	25/26 Annual Target
Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS)	170
Move More Cancer Rehabilitation and Rehabilitation Programme	100
Age Friendly (Live Long, Fall's Prevention, Walking Netball, Aqua Fit and Nordic Walking)	22,000
Exercise for Mental Health Programme	2,000
Pulmonary Maintenance Programme	600
Cardiac Rehabilitation and Maintenance Programmes	1,200
Programmes for People with a Disability	500
Veterans	30
Active Pregnancy- (Pre and Post Natal)	100
Substance Abuse	20

As part of the ongoing Health Intervention Action Plan, officers were preparing to complete the action plan by introducing the last two programmes in the 2025/26 period: Active Pregnancy (Pre- and Post-Natal) and Substance Misuse Support.

Preparatory work was underway, with training scheduled to enable delivery of the Active Pregnancy programme. In parallel, officers would engage with relevant substance misuse charities and partner organisations to support the effective development and targeting of the second programme, ensuring it reached those most in need.

The Head of Leisure Operations responded to queries regarding the use of Peace Plus funding for the delivery of the Action Plan and advised that a report on the matter would be presented at the June meeting of the Operations Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Logue
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

that the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Deaglan O'Hagan, Head of Leisure Operations

4.3 CP/CP/231 SPORT NI FUNDING TO DISTRICT COUNCILS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the delivery of the Sport Northern Ireland (NI) Community Planning Investment Programme.

2. Background

Sport NI was a statutory partner in the Council's Community Development process and worked closely with the Council on initiatives that promote physical activity and well-being.

Sport NI had identified significant disparities in sport and physical activity participation, particularly among underrepresented and disadvantaged groups. These include:

- Women and girls
- People with disabilities
- Children and young people (particularly aged 11–18)
- Older adults (aged 65+)
- Ethnically diverse communities
- LGBTQ+ communities
- Residents in areas of greatest need
- Individuals living in rural areas

3. Previous Decision of Council

In December 2024, Council approved the acceptance of £48,370 in funding from Sport NI to support delivery of the **"Take a Dive into 25"** Physical Activity Community Outreach Programme. The programme specifically targeted children and young people and incorporated monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess impact, inform future delivery, and highlight achievements.

4. Programme Delivery

Safe Running in Winter Workshop – January 2025

In collaboration with Community Development, a high-profile Safe Running in Winter event was held at Mossley Mill to support the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) campaign. The event attracted over 150 participants and featured contributions from:

- PSNI
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
- Professor Sharon Madigan (Sports Nutritionist)
- Ciara Mageean, Olympian and European Gold Medallist (Keynote speaker)

"Take a Dive into 25" Programme (January – March 2025)

1. Healthy Kids Schools Coaching Programme
 - Delivered in over 30 primary schools
 - Reached more than 1,000 children across the Borough

2. Teens: Healthy Body, Healthy Mind Programme
 - Hosted in five Council Leisure Centres
 - Targeted engagement with young people
3. Club Outreach Workshops
 - Over 200 attendees including coaches and athletes
 - Sessions included:
 - *Athletic Conditioning* with Ireland Rugby 7s Coach Peter Donnelly (Northern Ireland Centenary Stadium)
 - *Nutrition for Performance* by Professor Sharon Madigan (Mossley Mill)
 - *Kicking for Success* with John Cooney (Ulster Rugby) and Oisín McConville (former Armagh GAA All-Star)
 - *Grants Workshop* delivered by the Council's Funding Hub Manager and Sport & Physical Activity Manager
4. Primary Schools Swimming Programme
 - Delivered to 12 primary schools
 - Involved over 300 pupils

At the request of Members, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations agreed to contact Sport NI once again to raise concerns about the exclusion of several internationally competitive sports that are not recognised by the organisation.

Proposed by Councillor Logue

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.4 FI/FIN/4 BUDGET REPORT – QUARTER 4 JANUARY TO MARCH 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with financial performance information at quarter four (January 2025 – March 2025) for Operations.

2. Introduction

As agreed at the August Council meeting, quarterly budget reports would be presented to the relevant Committee or Working Group. All financial reports would be available to all Members.

3. Summary

The budget report for Period 12 did not include adjustments required to arrive at the final financial position of the Council for the 2024/25 financial year. These adjustments included final accruals of expenditure incurred and

grants and debts invoiced after 31 March 2025, contributions to or from reserves, and prepayments of expenditure and income.

Budget reports for Sustainability and Parks & Leisure Operations for Quarter 4 – January 2025 to March 2025 are enclosed for Members' information. At present the Parks and Leisure budget was in a favourable position of £1,018,671 (4.8%) due to the following reasons:

- Overachievement of income in leisure memberships and Crematorium
- Vacancies within Parks Section

The Sustainability budget was also in an adverse position of £1,922,831 (8.6%) and this was due to:

- Significantly higher waste treatment rates for residual waste;
- Increase in waste arisings above predicted levels;
- Lack of funding provision in the treatment of green waste;
- Delay in the harmonisation of waste collection services.

Proposed by Alderman Smyth

Seconded by Councillor Foster and agreed that

the report be noted.

4.5 PK/GEN/021 ULSTER IN BLOOM AND NI AMENITY AWARDS 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to provide an update on Council's submission for the 2025 Ulster in Bloom and Northern Ireland Amenity Award competitions.

2. Background

The Translink Ulster in Bloom competition, coordinated by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), was an annual initiative celebrating horticultural excellence and community collaboration across Northern Ireland. The competition was built on three core pillars: horticulture, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

The Northern Ireland Amenity Council, established to promote the protection and enhancement of the physical environment, supports initiatives such as Best Kept and leads the Northern Ireland Amenity Awards. These awards had inspired similar environmental competitions across the UK, the Republic of Ireland, and Europe, including Tidy Towns and Entente Florale. Entries were typically submitted by local authorities, housing associations, and residents' groups.

Traditionally, the same towns and villages were entered into both the Ulster in Bloom and Northern Ireland Amenity Award competitions to ensure consistency and maximise the impact of each submission.

3. Review of 2023 Awards and Submission for 2024

Officers had undertaken a comprehensive review of judging feedback from the 2024 and previous years' competitions, which evaluated entries across the three key categories: horticulture, environment, and community engagement. The review identified several entries facing persistent challenges, particularly in terms of limited community involvement, which has resulted in lower scores.

In response, these areas would not be submitted for the 2025 competitions. Instead, tailored action plans were being developed to address the specific barriers identified. These plans would focus on enhancing local engagement and strengthening the capacity of community groups to support future participation.

As part of this strategic approach, Council would submit a total of 12 towns and villages for the 2025 competitions:

Antrim	Ballyclare	Crumlin	Toome
Templepatrick	Ballynure	Randalstown	Doagh
Carnmoney	Doagh	Merville	Ballyeaston

At the request of a Member, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations undertook to ensure that the Ulster in Bloom judging committee is made aware of the active Community Group in Carnmoney Village.

The Director also informed Members of an error in the report, noting that Doagh had been listed twice. He clarified that there are a total of eleven towns and villages participating in the 2025 competitions.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

4.6 **EH/EHS/LP/001 ANBC vs THE CLEVER KOOKS GROUP LTD**

1. Purpose

This report provided a summary of the prosecution initiated against The Clever Kooks Group Ltd for their failure to comply with the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

2. Background

The Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 requires that food establishments display their hygiene rating in a visible and accessible location. This scheme provided consumers with information about the hygiene standards of food businesses, helping them make informed decisions when choosing where to eat or shop for food. The ratings, ranging from 0 (urgent improvement)

to 5 (very good), were determined by Council based on inspections verifying food hygiene compliance.

3. Key Issues

On 3 March 2025, Environmental Health secured a prosecution at Antrim Magistrates Court against The Clever Kooks Group Ltd for not displaying their Food Hygiene rating. The business, trading as The Crooked Glen 2.0 in Crumlin, was fined £500 and ordered to pay additional costs to Council (to be awarded in May 2025) for failing to properly display the rating, as required by the Food Hygiene Rating Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. The business received a hygiene rating of 1 in December 2023 but failed to display it in the prescribed manner. Initially the business received warning letters in February 2024 and when no corrective action occurred, Council proceeded with the prosecution.

4. Summary

The Clever Kooks Group Ltd, trading as The Crooked Glen 2.0 in Crumlin, was fined £500 and ordered to pay costs for failing to display its food hygiene rating following a December 2023 inspection, despite receiving written warnings.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

the report be noted.

5 **ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS**

- 5.1** In response to a query from a Member, the Head of Parks Operations advised that a compost delivery was expected and would be distributed to allotment holders. He also confirmed that, following the theft of three skips, an alternative method for removing green waste would be implemented and would be communicated to allotment holders in due course.

ACTION BY: Paul Mawhinney, Head of Parks Operations

- 5.2** The Director of Waste Operations outlined the prosecution procedure for fly tipping in the Borough and explained that if any personal materials were included in the illegally dumped waste then Council would seek a potential prosecution.
- 5.3** Members thanked Councillor McWilliam for her term as Chair of the Operations Committee and wished her well.

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor McLaughlin and agreed

that the following Committee business be taken In Confidence and the livestream and audio recording would cease.

6 ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 **IN CONFIDENCE** WM/WM/037 HARMONISATION OF WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES IN THE BOROUGH – UPDATE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Proposed by Councillor Gilmour
Seconded by Councillor McAuley and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Head of Waste Strategy and Sustainability

6.2 IN CONFIDENCE L/LEI/BE/003 AUTOMATED TEE SYSTEM - BALLYEARL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the Business Case for the renewal of the automated tee system at the Ballyearl Leisure Centre Driving Range at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED]

2. Background

In 2014, the former Newtownabbey Borough Council approved the installation of an automated tee system at the Ballyearl Driving Range. The system was introduced to enhance the customer experience and improve operational efficiency by eliminating the need for golfers to manually place each ball on the tee. It also featured adjustable tee heights to cater to players of all skill levels.

The current system was no longer operational due to the supplier's inability to provide replacement parts, which are now obsolete. As a result, an upgrade was essential to restore full service and maintain the quality of the customer experience.

3. Proposed Project

As outlined in the Business Case (circulated), multiple options were assessed, with Option 2 identified as the preferred solution. This involves the installation of a new automated tee system across seven driving range bays. This upgrade

would support the centre's long-term business growth and improve accessibility for users with disabilities or mobility challenges.

4. Financial Implications

The total estimated cost for the replacement project was £[REDACTED]. This included an upfront capital investment of £[REDACTED] for equipment and £[REDACTED] in projected maintenance costs over a 60-month period. Subject to approval, installation was scheduled for mid to late June 2025.

At the request of a Member, the Director of Parks and Leisure Operations undertook to look into the possibility of corporate sponsorship for Ballyearl Leisure Centre Driving Range.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed that

the Business Case for the renewal of the automated tee system at the Ballyearl Leisure Centre Driving Range at an estimated cost of £[REDACTED] be approved.

ACTION BY: Conor McCallion, Leisure Development Manager and Matt McDowell, Director of Parks and Leisure Operations

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Alderman Smyth and agreed

that the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

The Chair thanked Elected Members, Directors and staff for their work throughout her term as Chair of Operations Committee.

There being no further Committee business, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.50pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.